

born under an inauspicious star. This warranted his parents to throw the baby into the ocean. It was there that the baby was swallowed by a fish where he lived for many years. The fish swam to the bottom of the ocean where Shiva was imparting the secrets of yoga to his consort, Parvati. Upon overhearing the secrets of yoga, Matsyendra began to practice yoga sadhana inside the fish's belly. After twelve years he finally emerged as an enlightened Siddha. This is often given as the origin of his name 'Lord of the Fishes' or 'He Whose Lord is the Lord of the Fishes'.

HATHA YOGA PRADIPIKA

Hatha yoga Pradipika written by Swami Svātmārāma actually means cell “self illuminating” or “that which illumines”. It is the text which eliminates a multitude of physical mental and spiritual problems for aspirants. Gorakhnath, the chief disciple of Matsyendranath, had earlier written books, poems and prose on the Hatha yoga system in the local dialect, but Svātmārāma compiled the entire wisdom of Hatha yoga in Sanskrit. Swatmaram has completely eliminated the Yama, moral codes and Niyama self restraints, which are the starting point in the Buddhist and Jain system as well as in stage Patanjali's Raj Yoga.

Emphasis on shatkarma

Here's the first thing we see that Swatmarama is not worrying at all about self control and self discipline in the form Yama and Niyama. The order is different. He begins by saying that you should first purify the whole body - stomach, intestine, nervous System and other Systems. Therefore, shatKarma comes first that is Neti, Dhauti, Basti, Kapalabhati, pranala and nauli.

In order to make the subject clear it was termed hatha, i.e. ha and tha yoga, a combination of two beeja mantras. It has been explained in hatha yoga that ha represents prana, the vital force, and tha represents mind, the mental energy. So hatha yoga means the union of the pranic and mental forces. When union between the pranic and mental forces takes place, then a great event occurs in man. This is the awakening of higher consciousness.

Prana shakti, the life force, and manas shakti, the mental force, are the two fundamental creators. Every object in the universe, right from the smallest atom to the largest star, is composed of these two shaktis or energies. When they interact with each other, when the interplay of these two shaktis takes place, then creation begins to unfold. When the two shaktis are separated from each other, or they are dissolved back to their source, then creation is dissolved. That is the great pralaya, i.e. the total annihilation of matter. In the field of physics also they speak along the same lines.

In yoga, life and consciousness are known as prakriti and purusha; in tantra they are known as Shakti and Shiva. In hatha yoga they are called ida and pingala; in Taoism, yin and yang, and in physics, matter and energy.

4. Garima – the ability to become heavy
5. Prapti – the ability to reach any place
6. Prakamya – the ability to stay under water and to maintain the body
7. and youth
8. Vashitva – control over all objects, organic and inorganic
9. Ishatva – the capacity to create and destroy at will.

A mahasiddha becomes omnipresent and omnipotent because he has purified and perfected the functioning of his physical and pranic bodies through mastery of hatha yoga, and has transcended the normal limitations of mind by traversing the path of raja yoga.

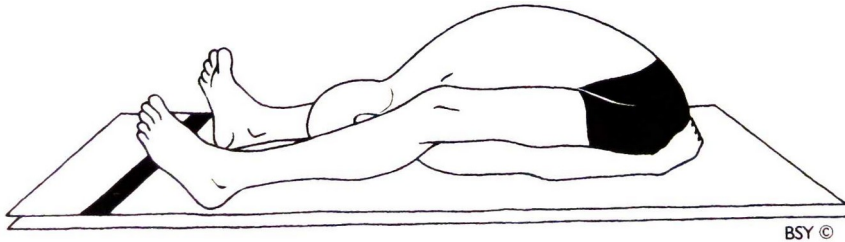
Through the practice of hatha yoga, one's entire being is made fit and strong, as a shelter from the effects of the pains which come in life. The Sanskrit word tapa has two meanings: one is 'to heat,' the other is 'pain. Pain itself is a type of heat. It tempers and heats the mind, emotions and physical body. Pain is of three types: adhyatmik, 'spiritual,' adhidevik, 'natural/environmental,' and adhibhautik, 'physical.'

As long as we feel the separation from our true identity, we will always suffer spiritually. Adhyatmik tapas is that which comes from living without realization of the inner being, and it is essential so that we strive for a purer experience. Pain brought by natural circumstances is also unavoidable. The course of nature always brings some climatic or geological imbalance such as flood, drought, earth tremors, winds, storms, etc. which affect the balance of the body's functions, and generally disturb the normal functioning of life. Business is affected, crop growth is affected and so are many things. Thirdly, there is physical suffering. Nature continually tests the body, sometimes by an imbalance of bacteria, sometimes by accidents, or sometimes by mental and emotional shocks. Therefore, it is essential that the hatha yogi prepares himself, not only physically, but also mentally, emotionally and psychically, in such a way that he can remain unaffected by these three types of external tempering.

The body and mind should be structured in such a way that they remain unaffected by the mundane circumstances of worldly events. In this way the body/mind becomes like a tortoise which can extend its limbs when necessary or retreat into the protection of its hard covering shell when threatened. The limbs are symbolic of the external senses, which should be externalized when necessary, but which, at our command, can be internalized and unaffected by the external happenings of the world.

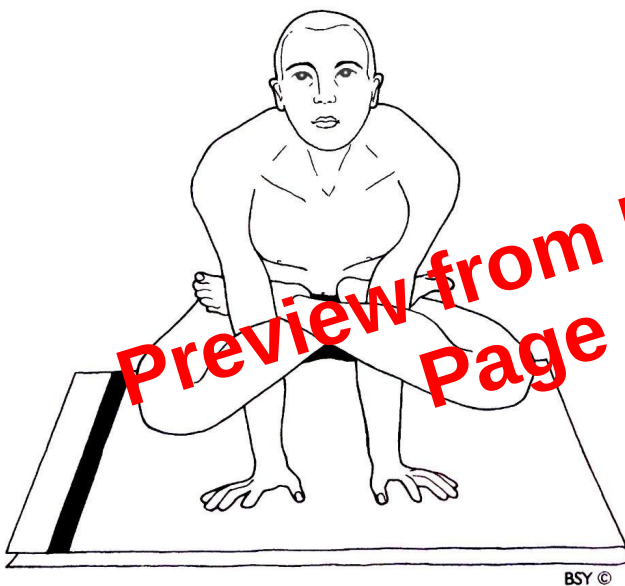
feet are supple it will be difficult to sit on them comfortably. Anyone who practices moola bandha will find this asana helpful.

Koormasana varies according to different texts. This particular asana is called koorma because the shape of the body resembles that of a tortoise.



KUKKUTASANA (cockerel pose)

Assuming padmasana, insert the hands between the thighs and calves, planting them (the hands) firmly on the ground, raise the body in the air. This is kukkutasana.



Kukkutasana is known as the cockerel pose as the shape of the body resembles a cockerel. This asana is said to be useful in the process of awakening kundalini. It strengthens the arm and shoulder muscles and gives the sensation of levitation. Normally the body weight is on the legs and feet, but in this asana it is altered and, therefore, the energies of the body flow in a different direction.

UTTAN KOORMASANA (stretching tortoise pose)

Sitting in kukkutasana, join both the hands at the shoulders and lie flat on the back like a tortoise. This is uttankoormasana.

The most conducive foods for the yogi are: good grains, wheat, rice, barley, milk, ghee, brown sugar, sugar candy (crystallized sugar), honey, dry ginger, patola fruit (species of cucumber), five vegetables, mung and such pulses, and pure water.

Pure water which is free of chemicals, excess minerals and harmful bacteria is essential, particularly for the purification practices. The most important attribute of the diet is that it should nourish the dhatus. There are seven dhatus or basic body structures: skin, flesh, blood, bone, marrow, fat and semen/ ova. Anything which destroys their natural balance should not be taken.

Fire, women and long pilgrimages should be avoided. Therefore Gorakhnath said: Bad company, mixing with women, bathing in the early morning, fasting and tasks which produce pain in the body should be avoided.

The hatha yogi should eat regular meals and not make a habit of fasting often. Fasting is useful to stimulate the digestive system, to eliminate toxins and to help bring the senses and mind under control. In sickness it stimulates the body to produce the necessary antibodies to fight disease and rebalance the body structure.

The stomach should never be overloaded; it should be half filled with food, one quarter with water and one quarter with air. Eating 'to please Shiva' means that when taking food the yogi should not feel that he is eating for himself. He should cultivate the attitude that he is nourishing the body for its maintenance so his consciousness can continue its process of unfoldment and spiritual evolution.

Mitahara means 'sattwic food,' light food which is easy to digest. As Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh points out, "Heavy food leads to a tamasic state and induces sleep only. There is a general misapprehension that a large quantity of food is necessary for health and strength.

Almost all diseases are due to irregularity of meals, overeating and unwholesome food.' His maxim is that through overeating you become a rogi, through sattwic diet a yogi.

The foods which are prohibited (for the yogi) are: those which are bitter, sour, pungent, salty, heating, green vegetables (other than those ordained), sour gruel, oil, sesame and mustard, alcohol, fish, flesh foods, curds, buttermilk, horse gram, fruit of jujube, oil cakes, asafetida and garlic.

CHAPTER 2

SHATKARMA AND PRANAYAMA

The word prana is a combination of two syllables, pra and na. Prana denotes constancy, it is a force in constant motion. Prana is the vital life force and pranayama is the process by which the internal pranic store is increased. Pranayama is comprised of the words prana and ayama, which means 'pranic capacity or length.' It is not merely breath control, but a technique through which the quantity of prana in the body is activated to a higher frequency.

Prana and mind are intricately linked. Fluctuation of one means fluctuation of the other. When either the mind or prana becomes balanced the other is steadied. Hatha yoga says, control the prana and the mind is automatically controlled, whereas raja yoga says, control the mind and prana becomes controlled. These are two paths of yoga.

In pranayama, it is the duration of breath retention which has to be increased. The longer the breath is held, the greater the gap between nervous impulses and their responses in the brain. When retention is held for a prolonged period, mental agitation is curtailed.

Death is not total. The physical body dies or the mind dies, but not the soul. Death is not extinction; it is a process of disintegration. The components of the body, the five tattwas: akasha 'ether,' vayu 'air,' agni 'fire,' apas 'water,' prithvi 'earth;' which are associated with the five prana vayus, disintegrate and go back to their original source. Akasha tattwa goes back to akasha, vayu to vayu, agni to agni, apas to apas, prithvi to prithvi, and then the jivatma moves out.

This jivatma, spirit, ego, astral body, or whatever you might like to call it, is something which survives death. The pranas also do not die, they move out of the body and return to their source. If death is to be averted the process unlinking all the three components i.e. prana, mind and soul, has to be stopped.

There are five main vayu functions, known as apana, prana, samana, udana and vyana. They are the different processes and manifestations of the one vayu, just as the various limbs of a man comprise the one body.

Pranic absorption takes place on a major scale in the thoracic region and is the function of prana vayu. Elimination takes place largely through the urinary/excretory and reproductive organs and is powered by apana. In between apana and prana, in the stomach region, is the area of assimilation, which is the function of samana. Movement in the throat and facial expressions are due to udana. Circulation is powered by vyana which pervades the whole body.

The next chakra is behind the navel, within the spinal column. It is a ten-petalled yellow lotus called manipura and it is associated with the solar plexus. Manipura influences the digestive process and the assimilation of food and prana. It is also connected to the eyes and sight. At the level of manipura the consciousness is still bound by the grosser levels of existence and sensualities, ambition and greed.

Above manipura, in the proximity of the heart, is anahata chakra, with twelve blue petals. It is connected to the cardiac plexus, heart, respiration and thymus gland and is responsible for emotions of love/hate, compassion/cruelty, etc. Anahata is also connected to the sense of touch and the hands.

Within the middle of the throat is the fifth chakra vishuddhi, with sixteen purple petals. It is associated with the cervical plexus and thyroid gland and it maintains purity in the body and mind. Vishuddhi is connected to the ears and sense of audition, throat and speech. It arouses acceptance of the adversities of life, mental balance and sensitivity to the needs of others.

At the top of the spinal column, at the medulla oblongata, is one of the most important chakras, ajna chakra, which has two silvery grey or clear petals. Above vishuddhi the chakras are mainly concerned with higher intelligence. Some authorities do not even consider them as chakras because, as the veiling power of prana shakti decreases, manas shakti becomes more predominant. Ajna chakra is the command center. It operates in conjunction with the reticular activating system, medulla oblongata and the pineal gland. Ajna chakra is the third eye through which the whole subtle world can be perceived. It is known as the gateway to liberation.

When kundalini shakti passes beyond ajna, duality and ego cease to exist. It reaches the highest center, sahasrara, the thousand-petalled lotus. Sahasrara is situated at the crown of the head and is associated with the pituitary gland. When this chakra is fully activated by kundalini it is the highest experience of human evolution.

Between ajna and sahasrara there are three other chakras which are briefly mentioned in the Tantras. Opposite the uvula is lalana chakra, which is a twelve-petalled lotus. Above ajna is manas chakra, a six-petalled lotus, and above that, at the mid-cerebrum is soma chakra of sixteen petals. These chakras are concerned with the flow of nectar from bindu visarga (which is discussed later), and they are responsible for higher states of consciousness and intelligence.

Purification of the chakras and nadis is the first step to physical/mental health and the awakening of kundalini. Therefore, the chakras and nadis have to be strengthened so they are capable of conducting the kundalini shakti. Therefore

pranayama should, be done daily with a sattwic state of mind so that the impurities are driven out of sushumna nadi and purification occurs.

There are three modes of nature and mind known as guna. Tamas, rajas and sattwa. Tamas is 'inertia,' rajas is 'dynamism' and sattwa is 'steadiness.' For example, a rock represents tamas, man represents rajas and divinity represents sattwa. The dull mind or the mind in which there is no awareness is tamasic or inert, the mind which oscillates between awareness and no awareness is rajasic or dynamic, and the steady, one-pointed mind is sattwic. Tamas is the first stage of evolution and it evolves into rajas and then sattwa. In the state of tamas, rajas and sattwa are potential forces. In the rajasic state there are traces of tamas and sattwa, and in the sattwic state, tamas and rajas do not exert any influence.

When sushumna awakens, this represents sattwa, when pingala functions it represents rajas and when ida functions, tamas. Thus it is best to practice pranayama when sushumna is flowing. When the breath is flowing naturally through both nostrils, it means sushumna is active. We do not always breathe through both nostrils, usually one nostril is open and the other is partially or fully closed. Science calls it 'alternate rhinitis.' In yoga it is known as swara.

The science of swara yoga says that the breath alternates from ida to pingala every hour. Modern science has also observed the same alternating process and its association with the activation of the right and left brain hemispheres.

According to swara yoga, during the flow of ida one should do quiet tasks and those requiring mental creativity. During the flow of pingala, physical work should be done and during the flow of sushumna the most suitable and productive activity is yoga abhyasa and dhyana. Factors which influence pranic flow in the nadis are: lifestyle, diet, desires, thoughts and emotions.

NADI SHODHANA PRANAYAMA (alternate nostril breathing)

Sitting in baddha padmasana, the yogi should inhale through the left nostril and hold the breath to capacity, and then exhale through the right nostril. Then inhaling through the right nostril, gradually fill the abdomen, perform, kumbhaka as before, then exhale completely through the left nostril. Inhale with the same nostril through which exhalation was done, hold the breath to utmost capacity and exhale through the other nostril slowly and not forcibly.

It activates and harmonizes ida and pingala nadis. Shodhana means "to purify". Many people have the tendency to take shallow breaths without filling their lungs to capacity. When you breathe in, the lungs should expand fully and the stomach should extend outwards. During exhalation the stomach should relax completely and the lungs should expel as much air as possible. Later on the

Suryabhedha can also be practiced by inhaling/exhaling through the right nostril only. However, when you breathe only through the right nostril, this might shut off ida nadi and functions of the left nostril. By exhaling through the left nostril you release energy and any impurities that remain in ida. By inhaling through the right nostril you draw the prana into pingala, and by retaining the breath after inhalation, you keep the prana in pingala.

Of course, this pranayama should only be done on an empty stomach, It stimulates the sympathetic nervous system and decreases the parasympathetic functions.

If this pranayama is practiced in the reverse manner, inhaling through the left nostril and exhaling through the right, it activates ida nadi and is known as chandrabhedha pranayama. In this text, nothing has been written about this pranayama because if ida is awakened the mind can introvert completely and the body will become lethargic. It is quite safe to activate pingala nadi through suryabhedha pranayama, but it can be dangerous to activate ida through chandrabhedha unless the guru has specifically advised it.

UJJAYI PRANAYAMA (psychic breath)

Ujjayi means 'victorious;' ujj is the root which means 'to conquer' or 'acquire by conquest.' In English ujjayi is known as the 'psychic breath' because of its effect on the mind. Though it is described here as a specific practice, this pranayama occurs spontaneously when concentration becomes deep and intense.

Ujjayi is often used in combination with mantra repetition, i.e. japa

on your guru mantra or soham/hamso. It is used in meditation practices, kriya yoga and yoga nidra because it helps relax the physical body and the mind, and develops awareness of the subtle body and psychic

sensitivity. Ujjayi promotes internalization of the senses and pratyahara.

When used in meditation, kumbhaka is omitted and ujjayi is performed through both the nostrils with natural inhalation/exhalation.

1. Sit in a comfortable meditative pose or lie in shavasana. Become aware of the natural breathing process and feel the air passing down through the windpipe.
2. Slightly contract the region at the back of the throat as you do when you swallow.

Shatkarmas

<i>DHAUTI</i>	<i>Antar dhauti</i> (internal)	vatsara (plavini) varisara (shankha- prakshalana) vahnisara (agnisara kriya) bahiskrita (rectal cleaning)
	<i>Danta dhauti</i> (teeth)	jihva (tongue) karna (ear) kapalrandhra (frontal sinuses) chakshu (eyes)
	<i>Hrid dhauti</i> (cardiac)	vastra (cloth) danda (stick) vaman (kunjara & vyaghra kriya)
	<i>Moola shodhana</i> (anal)	
<i>BASTI</i>	<i>Jala</i> (water) <i>Sthala</i> (dry)	
<i>NETI</i>	<i>Sutra</i> (thread) <i>Jala</i> (water) <i>Dugdha</i> (milk) <i>Ghrita</i> (ghee)	
<i>TRATAKA</i>	<i>Antaranga</i> (internal) <i>Bahiranga</i> (external)	
<i>NAULI</i>	<i>Dakshina</i> (right) <i>Vaksha</i> (left) <i>Madhyama</i> (middle)	
<i>KAPALABHATI</i>	<i>Vatakranta</i> (breathing) <i>Vyutkranta</i> (reversed) <i>Sheetkranta</i> (cooling)	

shatkarma. Shat is 'six,' karma is 'action.' These techniques regulate the production of the doshas. The conduct of these Shatkarma:- Dhauti, Vasti, Neti, Nauli, Trataka and Kapalabhati is essential for a yogi.

DHAUTI (internal cleansing)

Dhauti is a process of cleansing the internal organs. Dhauti karma has been considered to be of four types with the distinction of

1. Antadhauti: Internal cleaning, (Using; air, water and cloth.
2. Danta Dhauti: The cleanliness of the apex area
3. Hrid Dhauti: Cleaning of the heart area (stomach, food pipe etc.)
4. Moolshodhan: Cleaning of the root part of the body, (anus, large intestine, urinary tubes, etc.)

of that cup, and should be dipped in your Kapalandhra and Bahyalandra. This type of practice provides relief from Kaphadosha. The nadis (blood vessels) above the skull become pure and attain divine vision. To palate your skull at the end of sleep, after meals and before sleep and at the end of the day.

CHAKSHU DHAUTI

It is bathing the eyes with tepid, saline water or with urine.

HRIDAUTI

There are three distinctions of Hridauti - Dand dhauti, Vaman dhauti and Vasan dhauti i.e. clothing dhauti,

DANDADHAUTI

The banana poles, turmeric sticks or flexible sticks should be inserted into the heart repeatedly and removed slowly. Then Kapha Pitta Clayad should be catharsis. This karma definitely destroys heart disease as well.

VAMAN DHAUTI (KUNJAL)

The knowledgeable seeker should drink water after the meal and after a moment, looking upwards, water should be expelled by vomit. This method prevents Kapha and Pitta.

There are mainly two types of Vaman dhauti,

First type water vomit is done after meals, which is also known as Vyagar Kriya. Vaman is 'to vomit,' vyaghra is 'tiger' just as a tiger regurgitates its food a couple of hours after eating, in this practice you vomit the food from the stomach three hours after a meal. If it is difficult you can drink a glass or two of warm saline water and then tickle the back of the throat with the first two fingers to induce vomiting. Traditionally, after performing this practice a sweet milk rice pudding should be eaten.

The second is called Kunjal Kriya, Kunjal kriya is almost identical to vyaghra kriya except it is performed on an empty stomach. You drink two to four glasses of warm saline water and vomit it out. There are no dietary restrictions afterwards.

VASAN DHAUTI (VASTRA DHAUTI)

Take a wide bandage of fine cloth and swallow it slowly. Then it should be taken out slowly. By the practice of this cloth dhauti, there is a suppression of disorders of gulm, fever, spleen, leprosy and phlegm. This dhauti increases the strength of healing and affirmation day by day.

Explanation: - Clothing type: - The cloth by which we practice dhauti kriya should be four fingers wide, that is, about two inches wide and its length should be at least six or seven yards. The fabric should be of cotton and should be very thin and soft, not rough.

Amateur practitioners should use the first one inch wide and three yards long bandage. When this practice starts easily, then the length and breadth of the

securely while still being able to pass it through the nose comfortably. Therefore, it is probably quite sufficient to pull the thread forwards and backwards.

JALA NETI (NASAL CLEANSING WITH WATER)

For jala neti you require a special neti lota or 'pot' which has a nozzle designed specifically so that it will fit into the nostril. The lota should be filled with warm saline water. The salt should be just enough to taste.

1. Stand squarely, legs apart, body weight evenly distributed between the two feet and lean forward. Tilt the head to the right side and place the nozzle in the left nostril.
2. Open the mouth slightly and breathe through the mouth. Keep the whole body relaxed and let the water pass out through the right nostril.
3. When you have used half of the water, remove the lota, remain bending forward, center the head and let the water run out of the nose.
4. Close the right nostril with the fingers and blow gently through the left nostril so that all the remaining water comes out. Practice in the same way passing the water through the right nostril. stand.
5. Throughout the whole practice keep breathing through the mouth and do not attempt to breathe through the nose. When flowing the nose, do not blow very hard, otherwise any remaining water may be pushed into the ears. It is important to remove all the water after the practice so irritation of the sinuses and mucous membrane does not occur. Although you can practice neti in a squatting posture, it is best to
6. If you experience pain in the nose during the practice, the quantity of salt is incorrect. Too little salt will create pain and too much salt will cause a burning sensation.

Instead of water you can use warm milk to practice **dugdha neti**, or warm ghee to practice **ghrita neti**. (If oil is used instead of ghee, it must be unconcentrated and with no added chemicals.) These two practices are classified as variations of jala neti. However, the most powerful form of jala neti is with urine. Though it is not mentioned in the hatha yoga texts, it is particularly useful for curing inflammation of the nasal passage and sinuses, and bleeding.

Neti can be practiced every day if you are suffering from sinusitis, colds, insensitivity to smell, nosebleed, headache, eyestrain or eye infections,

MAHA MUDRA (the great attitude)

Although maha mudra is a technique of hatha yoga it is also one of the kriya yoga practices. It involves asana, kumbhaka, mudra and bandha and makes a powerful pranic lock which spontaneously arouses meditation.

1. Sit with the right leg stretched in front, bend the left knee and press the heel into the perineum or vagina. This posture is called utthan padasana. Exhaling, lean forward and grasp the big toe of the right foot.
2. Keep the head erect, eyes closed and the back straight. Relax in the position. Perform khechari mudra, then slowly inhale, tilting the head slightly backwards and perform shambhavi mudra (gaze at the eyebrow center).
3. Hold the breath inside (antar kumbhaka) and perform moola bandha (contraction of the perineum/cervix). Rotate your awareness from the eyebrow center to the throat and base of the spine, mentally repeating 'ajna, vishuddhi, mooladhara' or 'shambhavi, khechari, moola,' while retaining the breath.
4. Continue for as long as you can hold the breath without straining. Then close the eyes, release moola bandha, lower the head into its normal position and exhale slowly. This is one round.
5. Practice three times with the left leg folded, change the position and do it on the right side three times.
6. Then keep both legs stretched in front, as in paschimottanasana and again perform the practice three times.

Maha mudra should be done after asana and pranayama and before meditation. You should only increase the number of rounds when instructed by your teacher or guru. If you cannot sit comfortably in utthan padasana you can practice in siddhasana/siddha yoni asana. Sit with the hands on the knees in jnana or chin mudra and practice in the same way, but without bending forward. Practice five to ten times.

BENEFITS

Maha mudra is a practice which purifies the entire network of nadis, balances ida and pingala and absorbs rasa or health-giving fluid so that it pervades one's entire being

Maha mudra clears the nadis and particularly stimulates the flow of sushumna. It increases one's vitality, stimulates digestion and harmonizes all bodily